Coast Guards

6037. SHRI N. DENNIS: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have prepared a plan to strengthen the Cost Guards; and

(b) if so, the steps taken so fare in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) and (b). The Coast Guard is being strengthened and modernized in accordance with the Five Year Development Plans of the Cost Guard, subject to the availability of funds.

Review of Imports and Exports (Control) Act, 1947.

6038. SHRI MOSRESHWAR SAVE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to review the Imports and Exports (Control) Act 1947 and various orders made under it;

(b) if so, the details thereof: and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which these will be amended?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c). In the light of new Trade Policy, it is proposed to repeal Imports & Exports (Control) Act, 1947 and enact a new legislation, namely, Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992. Notice for introducing the Bills in the Lok Sabha has already been given

[*Translation*]

Licences for Opium Cultivation in Rajasthan

6039. SHRI RAM NARAIN BERWA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) number of new licences issued for opium cultivation in Rajasthan during the last three years;

(b) whether U.S.A and several European countries are against the said policy in regard to producing more opium;

(c) whether the Government are making efforts to bring down the production of opium in view of the protest of these countries; and

(d) if so, the details of the action plan there?

THE MINSTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) to (d). No new licence has been issued for opium poppy cultivation in Rajasthan during the last three years as the policy of the Government of India is to allow the production of opium only by the traditional poppy cultivators.

Export of Indian opium had been facing stiff competition in the international market from alternate cheaper opiate raw material, namely concentrate of poppy straw, which resulted in accumulation of stocks of opium in India. To reduce existing stocks of opium and to stop further accretion to it, India has reduced licensed area under poppy cultivation progressively over the years from 66,000